

## Module Template for New and Revised Undergraduate Modules<sup>1</sup>

<b>Module Code</b>	PSU12150
<b>Module Name</b>	Foundations of Psychology
<b>ECTS credit weighting</b>	5 ECTS
<b>Semester taught</b>	Semester 1
<b>Module Coordinator/s</b>	Lorraine Swords

### Module Learning

### Outcomes with embedded Graduate Attributes

On successful completion of this module, students will be able to:

- **Describe** the major historical developments that contributed to the emergence of psychology as a scientific discipline.
- **Identify** key philosophical, scientific, and cultural influences on the development of psychological thought from antiquity to the modern era.
- **Recognise** the principal ideas and contributions of major historical figures, schools, and movements in psychology, including structuralism, functionalism, behaviourism, psychoanalysis, humanistic psychology, cognitive psychology, and positive psychology.
- **Explain** how different historical perspectives have shaped contemporary psychological theory and practice.
- **Compare** the central assumptions and contributions of major psychological figures or schools of thought.
- **Demonstrate knowledge and understanding** of the chronology and evolution of key concepts, theories, and approaches within the history of psychology.
- **Become** critical consumers of psychological knowledge and recognise why certain historical approaches were abandoned while others were improved and refined.
- **Demonstrate** capacity for critical thinking about the interplay of core principles, research and practice in the development of various psychological disciplines.

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<sup>1</sup> [An Introduction to Module Design](#) from AISHE provides information on designing and re-designing modules.

## Module Content

This module traces the development of the discipline of psychology from its philosophical and physiological foundations right up to its present-day application in various spheres of human activity. Students will be introduced to key historical happenings, conceptual issues, research approaches, and practices within the major psychological perspectives and fields of study.

- *Week One:* Introduction - Becoming a Critical Reader of Research
- *Week Two:* Towards a Science of Psychology
- *Week Three:* Science & Pseudoscience
- *Week Four:* Social Psychology: Historical Perspectives on Ethical Practices in Psychology
- *Week Five:* Reading Week
- *Week Six:* Biological Psychology: Nature, Nurture & Evolution of Behaviour
- *Week Seven:* Developmental Psychology: Historical Perspectives on Studying Childhood
- *Week Eight:* Individual Differences: Historical Perspectives on Mental Illness
- *Week Nine:* Humanistic Psychology/ Positive Psychology
- *Week Ten:* Module Overview & Exam Preparation

## Teaching and Learning Methods<sup>2</sup>

Students will be supported in achieving the learning outcomes through a range of teaching and learning activities designed to promote engagement with key historical concepts, theories, and figures in psychology.

Lectures will provide a structured overview of the major historical developments in psychology, introducing key figures, theories, schools of thought, and intellectual movements. The chronological organisation of content will help students understand the evolution of psychological ideas and the connections between different historical periods.

Interactive elements such as class discussions, polling questions, think-pair-share activities, and short quizzes will be incorporated into lectures to encourage active engagement with the material and to reinforce understanding of key concepts. Students will be encouraged to compare and contrast different schools of thought and theoretical perspectives through the use of timelines, concept maps, summary tables, and guided comparison exercises. These activities support understanding of how psychological theories developed and evolved over time.

Practice MCQs, online quizzes, revision exercises, and in-class knowledge checks will provide opportunities for formative assessment. These activities allow students to

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<sup>2</sup> [Trinity-INC](#) provides tips and resources on how to make your curriculum more inclusive.

monitor their understanding, identify areas requiring further study, and become familiar with the format of the summative assessment.

Together, these approaches provide a structured yet engaging learning environment that promotes both understanding and retention of the historical foundations of psychology.

### Assessment Details<sup>3</sup>

Please include the following:

- **Assessment Component**
- **Assessment description**
- **Learning Outcome(s) addressed**
- **% of total**

It is recommended that module co-ordinators consider assessment types used across the year to ensure varied assessment methods.

The learning outcomes for this module focus primarily on students' acquisition of foundational knowledge, understanding of key concepts, recognition of major theoretical perspectives, and ability to distinguish between historical developments within psychology. Multiple-choice question (MCQ) assessment is therefore well aligned with these outcomes, as it provides an effective and reliable means of assessing breadth of knowledge across the full range of module content. Carefully constructed MCQs can test not only factual recall but also conceptual understanding, comparison, and application of knowledge.

Given that the module covers a broad historical span—from the philosophical origins of psychology through to contemporary movements such as positive psychology—MCQ assessment allows comprehensive sampling of content across the entire curriculum. This reduces the likelihood that assessment performance is determined by a narrow subset of topics and encourages students to engage with all aspects of the module. In addition, MCQs provide a highly objective and reliable form of assessment, ensuring consistency in marking and fairness across students. They are particularly appropriate for assessing large cohorts and enable efficient evaluation of learning outcomes related to knowledge acquisition and understanding. As the module is designed to provide a broad overview of the historical foundations of psychology rather than extensive training in written argumentation or independent research, MCQ testing represents an appropriate and proportionate method of assessment.

Overall, MCQ assessment is well positioned to measure the module's intended learning outcomes by providing a valid, reliable, and comprehensive assessment of students' knowledge and understanding of the history of psychology. As such, **this module is assessed 100% by MCQ.**

The exam will take place during College's main exam period and will last two hours. During this time students will be presented with 150 questions relating to the content covered in lectures over the module.

Students will get 1 point for each correct answer. There is no deduction for incorrect answers. Students should enter one (and only one) response for each question.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.tcd.ie/academicpractice/resources/assessment/>

**Contact Hours and Indicative Student Workload<sup>4</sup>**

<b>Contact hours: 22</b>
<b>Independent Study (preparation for course and review of materials): 66 hours</b>
<b>Independent Study (preparation for assessment, incl. completion of assessment): 44 hours</b>

**Inclusive Curriculum**

*All modules should be inclusive for all students who learn differently. Please respond to the following questions (i.e. ensuring the course supports engagement and representation of all students)*

	<b>PLEASE TICK</b>
1. Have you reviewed the teaching / assessment methods and materials for possible barriers to learning, e.g. students with English as a second language, disabilities, significant external responsibilities, students with IT issues / requiring specific accessibility software etc.?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Have you adapted your resources and teaching materials taking into account Trinity's Accessible Information Guidelines ( <a href="https://www.tcd.ie/disability/teaching-info/TIC/materials.php">https://www.tcd.ie/disability/teaching-info/TIC/materials.php</a> )?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. Does the content of your module address diversity? For example, including a diverse demographic profile of authors, diversity of ideas and perspectives, or representation (e.g. pictures of conditions on different skin tones), or by acknowledgement of the homogenous context of the discipline/topic?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4. Highlight at least two ways which your course/module incorporates principles of inclusivity and accessibility into the curriculum design	
<p><b>1. Provision of Accessible and Flexible Learning Materials</b> Lecture slides, reading lists, and supplementary learning resources will be made available in advance via Blackboard. Materials will be provided in accessible formats. Clear learning objectives and structured study guides will further support students with diverse learning needs.</p> <p><b>2. Representation of Diverse Perspectives in the History of Psychology</b> The curriculum aims to move beyond a traditional focus on Western and male-dominated accounts of psychology by incorporating the contributions of women, minority scholars, and non-Western perspectives, where relevant. Discussion of how social, cultural, and historical contexts have shaped psychological theory can encourage students to critically reflect on whose voices have been represented</p>	

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.tcd.ie/academicpractice/resources/assessment\\_workload/](https://www.tcd.ie/academicpractice/resources/assessment_workload/)

within the discipline and whose have been overlooked. This promotes a more inclusive understanding of psychology's history and development.

### **3. Multiple Opportunities for Engagement and Participation**

Although the module is assessed by MCQ examination, teaching activities will incorporate a variety of participation methods, including verbal discussion, anonymous polling, online quizzes, and reflective exercises. Offering different ways for students to engage with content helps create an inclusive learning environment that accommodates diverse communication styles and levels of confidence.

### **4. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Principles**

The module will adopt Universal Design for Learning principles by presenting information through multiple formats (e.g., lectures, visual timelines, concept maps, videos, and readings) and by providing regular formative quizzes and revision resources. These approaches support different learning preferences and help students build understanding incrementally throughout the module.

By embedding accessibility and inclusivity into both content and teaching practices, the module can foster a learning environment in which all students are supported to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

#### **Indicative Reading List (approx. 4-5 titles)**

- Fancher, R.E. (2016). *Pioneers of Psychology*. London; Norton.
- Jarvis, M., & Okami, P. (2020). *Principles of Psychology*. Oxford University Press.
- Pickren, W. E., & Rutherford, A. (2010). *A history of modern psychology in context*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Schultz, D., & Schultz, S. E. (2015). *A history of modern psychology* (11th ed.). CENGAGE Learning Custom Publishing.

#### **Module Pre-requisite**

None

#### **Module Co-requisite**

None

#### **Are other Schools/Departments involved in the delivery of this module? If yes, please provide details.**

No